

STORM DAMAGE

INFORMATION FOR LANDOWNERS



South Carolina
Forestry Commission

MANAGING YOUR STORM-DAMAGED WOODS

TECHNICAL & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Safety

Many trees in storm-damaged areas have branches which may fall at any time, so be sure to wear a hard hat and stay out of the woods during windy conditions. Other hazards such as limbs on the ground are more prevalent following storms, so use caution while walking in your woods.

Contact a professional forester for assistance

For help in assessing the damage to your property, contact your local SC Forestry Commission forester (<http://www.trees.sc.gov/sc.htm>) or a consulting forester (<http://www.trees.sc.gov/consult.htm>).

Salvage removal

Some stands of trees were heavily damaged, but still contain enough healthy trees to continue to be managed for the long term. See the guidance below for advice on determining if you should retain an area or conduct a salvage harvest.

Cost-share assistance

REPLANTING

In stands with heavy damage, replanting may be necessary. It is likely that financial assistance will be available for some counties through the USDA's Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP). Details about this program are available at: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/emergency-forest-restoration/>. Forest landowners with significant damage are advised to go to their local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office to apply for EFRP. The location of local offices can be found at: <https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=sc&agency=fsa>.

HELP IN REPAIR OF FOREST ROADS

Forest landowners in certain South Carolina counties who

suffered storm-related losses such as washed out roads or damaged stream crossings may be also be able to receive financial assistance through the USDA's Emergency Forest Restoration Program. Forest landowners needing this type of assistance should go to their local Farm Service Agency office to apply for EFRP.

Tax considerations

Loss of timber from a casualty such as an ice storm may be deductible from your taxes. Contact your accountant and/or consulting forester to see if you qualify for this deduction. Information about casualty loss is also available at: <https://www.timbertax.org/getstarted/casualty/timbercasualty/>. **Note:** To ensure that you receive the highest price for your timber (even though the salvage value will be much lower than the normal price), you will need to try to obtain several bids if possible. Be sure to use a written contract as well. Many consulting foresters provide assistance with timber sales and can save you the headache and uncertainty of trying to carry out the harvest yourself - <http://www.trees.sc.gov/consult.htm>.

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Below are some general guidelines that will help you determine the severity of the damage to your woods and assist you in deciding on your next steps.

Pines

Damage to pine stands depended on the age, species, and past practices (thinned or not), but generally can be grouped into three categories:

Light Damage – stands in which less than 30 percent of trees are leaning more than 30°, were blown over, or had their tops broken. Salvage of damaged trees in these areas is usually not practical and may cause injury to

Damage overview

Tornadoes and other storms cause varying degrees of damage to the forests. Damage to trees can range from “light,” where branches in treetops were broken, to “heavy,” where trees snapped off, were blown over, or lost most of their branches. Forest damage can be highly variable across the affected areas and depend on tree species, age and whether the stand had been thinned recently or not. The level and extent of damage you sustained as well as your ownership objectives will help you determine what actions are needed to restore the health and productivity of your woods. The recommendations below are designed to provide you with basic guidance as you make decisions about the best course of action to follow.

remaining trees. All stands that fall into this light damage category need to be monitored for forest pest buildup and protected from wildfire.

Moderate Damage – includes stands in which 30 to 50 percent of the trees are leaning more than 30°, were blown over, or had their tops broken. If at least 100 to 300 healthy trees per acre remain, the stand will most likely recover on its own. Other stands with significant damage may warrant salvage removal of affected trees, although this action is not critical. All stands of trees



that fall into this moderate damage category need to be monitored for forest pest buildup and need to be protected from wildfire.

Heavy Damage – includes stands in which over 50% of the trees have significant damage. These areas need to be evaluated by a professional forester and may need to be harvested and replanted.

Hardwoods

Light Damage – includes stands of trees in which less than 30 percent of trees were blown over or had their tops broken. In most cases, no action is needed in areas of hardwoods with light damage.

Moderate Damage – includes stands in which 30 to 50 percent of the trees were blown over or had their tops broken. If at least 100 to 300 healthy trees per acre remain, the stand will most likely recover on its own. Other stands with significant damage may warrant salvage removal of affected trees, although this action is not critical.

Heavy Damage – includes stands in which over 50% of the trees have significant damage. These areas need to be evaluated by a professional forester and may need to be harvested and regenerated.

Points to remember

1. Practice safety first and foremost. Hazards are more numerous in storm-damaged woodlands than in unaffected areas.
2. Don't act hastily. Damaged pines retain value for up to nine months, so make sure that you seek the best price if salvage is deemed necessary.
3. Get professional advice. Growing timber is a long-term investment, so decisions made today can have long-lasting effects.

WHOM TO CALL

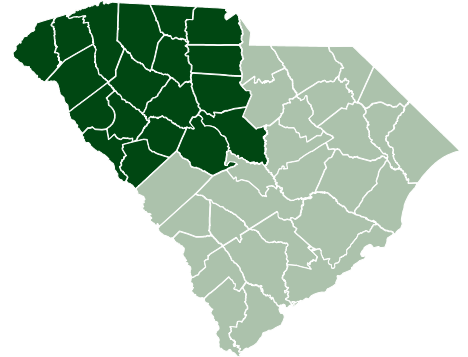
AT THE SOUTH CAROLINA FORESTRY COMMISSION

Piedmont Region

Abbeville, Anderson, Edgefield, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Oconee, Pickens, Saluda, Cherokee, Chester, Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry, Richland, Spartanburg, Union, York Counties

39 General Henderson Road, Newberry, SC 29108

(803) 276-0205

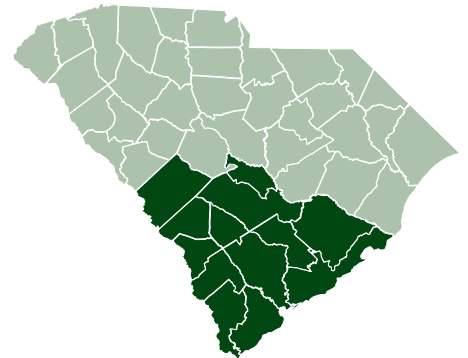


Coastal Region

Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, Jasper, Berkeley, Calhoun, Charleston, Dorchester, Orangeburg Counties

413 Sidneys Road, Walterboro, SC 29488

(843) 538-3708



Pee Dee Region

Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Marion, Williamsburg, Chesterfield, Clarendon, Darlington, Kershaw, Lancaster, Lee, Marlboro, Sumter Counties

113 Forestry Commission Drive, Florence, SC 29501

(843) 662-5571

